

AMENDED IN SENATE AUGUST 6, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 154**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Gray**  
**(Coauthor: Assembly Member Olsen)**  
(Coauthors: Senators Cannella and Galgiani)

May 27, 2014

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 154—Relative to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 154, as amended, Gray. Modesto City Schools: World Geography-World-~~Religion~~ *Religions* class.

This measure would acknowledge and applaud the Modesto City Schools’ initiative and achievement in teaching the unique World Geography-World-~~Religion~~ *Religions* class as a grade 9 required course for the last 15 years, and would recommend that the class be considered for adoption by other school districts in the state.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1     WHEREAS, The United States Declaration of Independence  
2     states that all men are created equal, and the Holy Sikh Scriptures  
3     contain hymns like, “One Father, and we are children of the One”  
4     and “Recognize ye, all Humanity as the Same”; and  
5     WHEREAS, Sikhism has 25 million followers, and is the fifth  
6     largest world religion after Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and  
7     Buddhism; and  
8     WHEREAS, Nearly 300,000 residents of California are Sikhs,  
9     who, by the dint of their hard work, have distinguished themselves

1 in all fields, as documented in Resolution Chapter 161 of the  
2 Statutes of 2010, Resolution Chapter 60 of the Statutes of 2012,  
3 and Resolution Chapter 105 of the Statutes of 2013; and

4 WHEREAS, Sikhism was founded in Northwestern India by  
5 Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and is not a branch of another religion,  
6 and Sikhs now have global distribution with Gurdwaras in more  
7 than 72 countries; and

8 WHEREAS, Large numbers of Americans are physically or  
9 psychologically attacked on the basis of their race, skin color,  
10 ethnicity, physical or mental abilities, sexual orientation, sex,  
11 gender identity, religion, culture, or age; and

12 WHEREAS, Turbaned Sikh children experience bullying at  
13 more than double the national rate; and

14 WHEREAS, The 115-member Community Safe Schools  
15 Committee of Modesto met for 14 months and presented in 1998  
16 a set of principles affirming respect for all; and, since 1999, the  
17 Modesto City Schools has engaged in the nation's most direct  
18 experiment in using the public school curriculum to promote  
19 respect for religious freedom and diversity; and

20 WHEREAS, The Modesto City Schools' World  
21 Geography-World—~~Religion~~ *Religions* class examines the  
22 geographical location, history, culture, and major beliefs of  
23 Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;  
24 and

25 WHEREAS, The nine character traits of responsibility and  
26 respect, which are courage, honesty, loyalty, respect, responsibility,  
27 civility, compassion, ~~initiative~~ *initiative*, and perseverance, are  
28 stressed throughout the class, and pupils are taught how to make  
29 appropriate comments without offending other pupils; and

30 WHEREAS, The class has been very successful in helping Sikh  
31 pupils feel more accepted and in helping pupils understand their  
32 First Amendment rights, understand and practice the character  
33 traits of respect and responsibility, become informed about the  
34 religious diversity in their community and the world, and obtain  
35 greater understanding about the six major world religions; and

36 WHEREAS, The Modesto City Schools is perhaps the only  
37 school district in the state that requires all pupils to learn about  
38 and understand world religions; now, therefore, be it

39 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
40 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature acknowledges and

1 applauds the Modesto City Schools' initiative and achievements  
2 in teaching the unique World Geography-World Religion ~~Religion~~ *Religions*  
3 class as a grade 9 required course for the last 15 years, and  
4 recommends that the class be considered for adoption by other  
5 school districts in the state; and be it further

6 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
7 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution to the  
8 Members of the Legislature, the Superintendent of Public  
9 Instruction, the county superintendents of schools for transmission  
10 to all school district superintendents, and other interested  
11 organizations or persons.

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